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## POPULAR TALES.

The Last Shilling.

BY J. C. DOW, WASHINGTON, D. C.

It was at the commencement of a stormy evening in the rainy season, when a young man, dressed in a soiled and tattered suit of clothes, which, like their wearer, had seen better days, rushed into the bar-room of one of the low hells of Lisbon, in a state of intoxication, and throwing himself upon one of the rude settees, ordered a bottle of *can de vie* to be placed before him. The assiduous attentions of the paragon soon supplied the wants of the impatient stranger, and drawing together the curtains of the alcove, he left him to attend to numerous calls from people of almost every nation under heaven.

The young man sat for some time with his head leaning on his hand, and nothing gave evidence of his existence but the escapement of a sigh, so deep and strong that—like the outbreaking of the smothering fire of a volcano—it seemed to burst asunder the subject from whence it proceeded. At length he drew from his pocket his purse, and after duly examining its lean and poverty-stricken appearance, turned out upon the marble table a solitary shilling. It was his all—he had arrived at the "ne plus ultra" of his riches, and poverty seemed with long and withered limbs to stalk before him. It was the turning point in the history of Henry Staunton—birth, friend, reputation; nay, even the decency of a vagabond, were about to be surrendered up to the power of intemperance and crime. He gazed about him with a look of madness; he had not calculated upon poverty—poverty such as this—when the dice and the gold rang upon the gaming table—when the song of the syren swelled high above the festive board, and the deluded votaries of Bacchus found a living pain in the draughts of *jolly Cham*.

He had calculated the cost of the degradation and debasement of a noble soul—but poverty! he had not thought of her—that cruel hag which, worse than the damning nightmare, sits heavily upon the breast, though lightly upon the stomach, of the poor unfortunate, and presses him down to a level with the ignominy and the vile. In our own happy country we hardly ever see or feel poverty—but in the old kingdoms of Europe, where the unfortunate are numberless, and where the tendency of their institutions is to make the poor, poorer, and the rich, richer—poverty such as man would gladly exchange for death, stalks about the street in slow and cadaverous form, scowling like the famished wolf for victims, and clutching her long, skinny fingers at the throats of rosy-cheeked children and well-fed friars.

Henry Staunton reflected—it was the first time that he had cast a thought upon his wretched condition for months. He looked at his ragged clothes, and shuddered—a little mirror before him showed him his finely shaped countenance bloated and red with unnatural excitement—a deep gash, half healed, marred the beauty of his commanding forehead, and thick, glossy, raven locks were matted with dirt and dust. His once smart beaver was knocked into a thousand angles, and his unwashed shirt collar hung over an apology for a black silk neck handkerchief, like a dirty job over the bow-pipe of a Newcastle collier. His whole dress would have brought him a handsome sum, had there been in the neighborhood some Billy Barlow, devoid of the necessary coarseness of his character.

The beauty remained unmoved—the fever of indignation had passed away—the fiercer feelings of human nature began, like an poured upon the stormy ocean, to calm the swelling and blackened surges of vice—and the tears that had long since been dried up, like a summer brooklet, suddenly accumulated in their parched channels. He drew a white handkerchief from his breast, and pressing it convulsively in his hand, gazed upon the name for a moment, then dashing his head upon the table, burst into a flood of tears. His sobs soon attracted the attention of the company in the next alcove, and the keeper of the hell, fearing that his foreign customer might be about to commit suicide in his premises, and thus lay upon him the onus of his burial, entered the recess, and shaking the unhappy youth by the collar, bade him seek a lodging elsewhere. "There was enough! Henry Staunton arose a new, a redeemed man. The hour of degradation had passed away, and with a smile upon his face, which, like the rainbow of God upon the retiring shadows of the deluge, gave evidence of future calmness, he replaced his memorial of early love, and lifting from the table his solitary shilling, bade the keeper of the hell observe that his brandy remained untouched. He then departed—and as he stepped out upon Praça del Rocio, the night wind howled around the rocks of Cintra, and the Tagus gave back its sounds with a thousand echoes.

Along the shores of Lisbon are numerous sands, where the money-loving boatmen of the Tagus huddle around a few brands, and await the hour when the naval officers from the various squadrons come down to return to their floating lodgings. The moustached sentinel paces along the quay with greater dignity as the middle hour of the night draws near, and the horse patrol make their only round when the joyous reeler, with the weather leech of his main-topgallant sail a little lifting, comes swearing down the streets, damning the earthquake for making them so billy, and the citizens for crowding them with unnecessary filth. As for the earthquake, that could not be helped—but for the nightly showers of unholy water that descend upon the heads of wandering strangers, from eight till twelve, P. M., from the numerous front windows of the eight storied houses of every street in Lisbon, nothing can be offered in extenuation. They are sins which cannot be forgiven by foreigners, and are barely tolerated by those who indulge in them.

It was to one of these fires that Henry Staunton bent his steps, as the heavy tones of the cathedral clock tolled eleven. Soon after his arrival there, the captain of a jacksack frigate, who had been dining with his country's consul, came rolling down like a ship in the chops of the channel in a heavy sea, with the wind free, and endeavoring to make the boatmen who beset him understand where he wanted to go—but from a natural thickness of his tongue, and an additional impediment in the shape of *agua ritard*, he endeavored in vain. At length Henry Staunton, who sat shivering over the few embers of the dying watch-fire, approached him, and in English, asked the stranger where he wished to be taken.

"Taken!" said the son of Neptune, with a heavy leech-lurch, "why taken on board, and be—

—d—d to you," and he chuckled at his wit, like a monkey who had put a hot chestnut into an unsuspecting cat's paw.

"But to what ship?" said Staunton.

"What ship?" said the captain—"why to the Boanerges, captain Spitfire, pierced for thirty-six long guns, with a shifting one astern. D—n it, sir, there she is, don't you see the lights under the mizzen-top? Suppose you go on board with me, youngster, as you seem curious—I always like to meet a countryman in a foreign land, especially after dinner. Come, bear a hand my boys, and bring up the boat."

A boat was soon ready, and, after numerous ineffectual efforts, the captain compromised the matter with his legs by rolling in on a couple of oars. Once on board, by force of habit, he rolled into the stern sheets in an upright position, and gave the order "Shove off."

The boatmen, however, refusing to move until they were paid, captain Spitfire seemed to ignite at this insult to his dignity, and was about to roll upon the quay in the same manner that he rolled in, when Staunton, recollecting his shilling, pulled it out, and shewing it to the boatmen, said, "If this will compensate you for your trouble, it is at your service."

"Thank you, my master," said the first oarsman, "it is small, but it will do," and hailing his companion, who immediately joined him, the boat shoved off from the quay, and soon lay along side of the frigate Boanerges, one of H. B. Squadron in the Tagus. The worthy representative of his country's honor was soon housed in his state room, and Henry Staunton, having been invited below by the master-at-arms, located himself on a grating between the two forward guns, on the starboard side of the gun-deck, and was soon lost in a sleep far more sweet than any that had blessed his eyelids since his departure from his native home, to learn the ways of damning vice in a guilty land.

"Seven bells," cried the master-at-arms of the Boanerges, as he came up the forward hatchway. "Turn out, turn out, you lazy lubbers," and administering a few gentle hints with his rattan, soon had the crew upon their feet, busily lashing up their hammocks.

Henry Staunton heard nothing of this din, until a bucket of golden water came splash in his face from the bucket of one of the afterguard, who was busily employed in washing down the deck. He started at his feet, and with good humor, acknowledging the fitness of the oblation, and then eyed about him. It was warm, and a golden one—then the shouts of *Ale agui* and *Lisbon* were bellowed with the good coloring of natives—the *ale agui* came out of the orange groves and purple hills—the cry of the smuggler was heard as his train of asses came down the steep bank of the shore, while the cheerful *yeo!* leave ho! of the lugger's crew, as they took on board the wine of Xeres and Oporto, awoke the echoes of the winding river's shores.

It was a long time before he could call to mind the occurrences of the previous night—and while he stood looking anxiously out of the bridge port, his forlorn condition attracted the sympathy of the British tars around him, who kindly gave him an invitation to their mess, and bade him brush up for his interview with 'Old Smoke Pipes,' the nick-name given to their commander by them.

Henry Staunton soon cleared himself from all remains of his old habits—his tattered suit went down on the bosom of the golden river, and his old shoes served to toll out two or three unwelcome sharks who had entered the bay for the purpose of overhauling the shoals of marrow-bones that had been thrown overboard until they had nearly overturned the admiral. After undergoing the martyrdom of being shaved by the ship's barber, Staunton dressed in a neat suit of sailor's clothing—his hair he combed over his wounded forehead, and as he paced the fore-castle with the quarter-master of the watch, awaiting the commands of the honorable captain Spitfire, he seemed like one of the fancy men of the Boanerges, just returned from a liberty-week on shore.

Just before the topgallant yards were crossed, captain Spitfire made his appearance in a neat

dress, and, with a seamanlike alacrity, endeavored to make up for his evening debauch by his strict search after the faults of others. After inspecting the ship thoroughly, and finding everything as usual in proper order, he sent for the master-at-arms, and bade him bring into the cabin in his scrub acquaintance of the previous evening.

Henry Staunton was soon in the presence of the commander, who bade the master-at-arms retire, and then turning to him, said in a gruff tone, "youngster, tell me your history!"

Staunton detailed the principal events of his dissolute life in a spirit of deep contrition, and when he had finished, he leaned his seat, and head upon his hand, and awaited his fate.

Captain Spitfire looked at the fine form and intelligent face before him for some minutes, and then striking his hand upon the table, said, "youngster, I'll make a man of you, for he whom the land casts off, the sea must swallow. You have improved *visibly* in your out-works since last night—see that you keep as clean here," striking his hand upon his breast. "Dirt and discipline never sail in company—and he that keeps his copper foul in his ship, must be worthy of condemnation!"—then turning, he rang a bell—the orderly entered. "Tell Mr. Slops, the purser, to bring up the rating list—another son of thunder waiting to be christened."

The purser had expected a morning call from his commander, and soon entered the cabin of the Boanerges, with his shipping articles in his hand; and in a few minutes Henry Staunton was rated a midshipman in the gallant navy of Britain.

"Here, sir," said the captain, handing Staunton a doubloon, "here is sufficient to buy you a jacket and dirk—act your part well, and from the glance of your top-lights I feel confident that you will do his majesty some service. Recollect, there is your shilling with interest—study the necessary part of your profession, and let the fancy business go to the devil, to whom it belongs. Ah! how white gloves and cologne water, speak as little cursed French as possible, and never call me Old Smoke Pipes on duty. Be off—I won't be thanked. I have read you like a book. Go to the first lieutenant and study the ropes, and be careful how you let Nip Cheese, (the purser), finger your doubloon."

Saying this, the excellent hearted captain bowed the newly dubbed midshipman of the Boanerges to the door of the cabin, and seeing the master's mate of the watch at the gangway, called out, "Mr. Slother, introduce Mr. Staunton to the young gentlemen below, and be careful how you cut up any monkey shins with him—there's the most head! You understand me sir! Good morning, Mr. Staunton."

A pendant was now seen flying from the admiral's signal halliards, and then was seen the Boanerges' number, and a signal below.

"What is it?" cried a dozen voices.

"Boanerges under way to get—follow the admiral with or without signals," said the signal officer, as he entered the cabin.

"Answer the signal, sir," said captain Spitfire, "Mr. Catharpin, all hands up anchor." Then the heavy roar of the admiral's signal gun came rolling over the deep, and the "blue peter" unrolled itself to the breeze, floated gaily at his fore.

Now all was bustle and apparent confusion, and (like all other ships of war that had been long anchored) the Boanerges got under way in a lubberly manner, and as the shades of evening fell upon the silent waters, took her departure from the rock of Lisbon.

Young Staunton was now on a new element. The dark hour had passed away, and the poor vagabond, who so lately would have sold his existence for rum, became a *Jemmy Reeler*, and was considered, ere he had been a week on board, the crack-officer of the cock-pit.

Onward the three decker rolled her course, and swiftly the gallant frigate followed in her wake. On the third day out, a signal from the admiral denoted a sail on the starboard bow, and soon another signal bade the Boanerges crowd all sail in chase. Now was captain Spitfire's time to show his intrinsic value. His qualities became apparent, (like those of the diamond), beneath the hand of the purser, and the gallant tar, ere the evening's shades were in sight, was ready for a private trifle on the deep. His wares were clear, his guns double shot, cutlasses, pistols, and boarding pikes were distributed by no inglorious hand, and the powder boys stood ready behind each gun with spare cartridges in their leathern passing boxes. Round shot and wads were in the shot racks, and the men were at quarters with their trousers rolled up to their knees, their jackets off, and their necks bare—some had handkerchiefs about their waists, and some had them twisted a *la Tarque* around their heads—looking as they stood in clusters around each iron mouth-piece like a component part of the cannon itself. The decks were sanded to prevent them from becoming slippery with blood.

The marines and top-men were at their stations, and the cock-eyed marine officer, with a tremendous muckle whanger, was marching up and down the larboard waste, now casting one eye into the fore-top, while the other rested on the mizzen, and now shaking his sword at some lazy fellow who had sat down to rest, probably to sigh over the melancholy reflections which the hour excited within his breast.

The captain was standing on the horse-block peeping through a mighty spy-glass, while the officer of the deck, assisted by two quarter-masters, and a few youngsters, was endeavoring to make out the craft from the opposite side of the ship. At length, as the Boanerges drew nearer, the frigate and her maintop-sail to the mast, and yawling gracefully, showed the flies of the Boanerges floating at her ensign peak.

"French, by ———," said captain Spitfire to Mr. Catharpin, the first lieutenant. "Stand by the bow-gun sir. All ready?"

"Aye aye sir," replied the captain of the division.

"Then let the Mounseer's hear your thunder—fire!"

"Bang," roared the bow chasers, and from a wreath of woolly smoke, the thirty-two pound shotspoon on its mission of destruction—it took the Frenchman's main ship, and slammed across his gun-deck—the splinters flew about merrily.

Considerable confusion was created by the salutation of the Boanerges, and L'Agile, for such was the French frigate, filled away, and endeavored to get the weather gage, but captain Spitfire was up to the frog-eater, and tossing him half a ton of cold iron in quick succession, the Boanerges bore down to board.

"First division of boarders away," thundered the captain, and from the different quarters of the ship came forth a flood of armed men in the twinkling of an eye. The Boanerges had now ran foul of L'Agile's stern, and making the frigates fast with his own hands, captain Spitfire, followed by young Staunton and a hundred men, gained the Frenchman's deck. It was a dreadful meeting—the French fought like tigers—the boarders flung themselves upon boarding pikes and points of cutlasses—battle-axes and hand grenades were hurled in every direction—the report of the boarder's pistol was followed by the crash of the next man's skull as its heavy butt descended upon it. The second division now came to the assistance of the first, headed by the first lieutenant, and they arrived in time to secure the victory. Harry Staunton had just cut the French captain down as he drew a pistol to shoot captain Spitfire. At that moment a pikeman pinned the gallant reeler to the mizzen-mast—but he had hardly done so before the cutlass of captain Spitfire laid him headless upon the deck.

At this moment the third division of boarders came pouring in, and in five minutes the flag of England floated at her ensign peak. "The cross it went up, as the lilies came down."

For a moment captain Spitfire had missed young Staunton, but now, seeing him leaning pale and trembling against the mizzen-mast, he sprang and released him, and while the tear stood in his eye he clasped him in his arms, and said—

"Well done, my young recruit—you have nobly earned your swab, and if there is any gratitude in the sea-girl's tale, you shall have a hand to your name ere I am three weeks older."

The surgeon instantly had his patient removed to his berth, and after a careful examination of his wounds, he conveyed to captain Spitfire the gratifying intelligence that his young charge would finally recover, notwithstanding he was severely hurt. The prize was then overhauled, and the damage to both hull and rigging repaired.

In the course of a couple of hours, captain Spitfire, having left the prize in command of lieutenant Catharpin, made the signal for "crowding on all sail," and the crew giving three cheers, which were re-echoed by the dark hollows of the ocean, L'Agile spread out her white wings, and followed swiftly in the wake of her conqueror. Night now settled upon the heaving ocean, and captain Spitfire, seeing no signs of the admiral, shaped his course for England. Three days after the action, the Boanerges, followed by her prize, passed the eddystone, and anchored in safety off Plymouth. The captain of the Boanerges reported himself to the port admiral, and then posted up to London, leaving Henry Staunton on the sick list. By return of post young Staunton received his commission as lieutenant in the British navy, with a leave of absence, and a handsome amount of prize money. Thus we leave our hero, to return to an earlier period of his life, to trace out the causes which led to such unforeseen, yet happy effects.

Henry Staunton was the only son of a wealthy merchant of Philadelphia, and having an austere father, and a weak and indulgent mother, he became as unfit for the realities of the world as one could expect under such circumstances. His follies for he had many—constantly brought upon him the reproaches and punishments of his father, and in the same ratio, the attentions and gifts of his mother. Thus matters went on until the day of his mother's death. That day was a melancholy one for her hero; he shut himself up in his room, and for days refused to be comforted. At length he became more calm, and met his father at their lonely meals with a brow bent down with sorrow.

Mr. Staunton, like a true business man, forgot his loss as soon as he usually did the loss of a ship, or the decline of *lucky stock*; and after numerous long and exciting conversations with his son, at last decided that he should become a merchant, and directed him to make up his mind to enter the counting house as soon as the fall business should commence. In the meantime, he gave him a check on his banker, with permission to spend the summer months at his country seat, in the interior of Connecticut.

It was a lovely and stately mansion, near one of the pleasantest villages in the blue law state, surrounded by orchards, gardens, and lawns, with a silver stream flowing at the foot of the little eminence upon which it stood. Its white-washed out houses, at a distance, gave it the appearance of a little village, and around it, the magic of wealth had spread a richness and magnificence seldom seen in the interior of the country. Henry Staunton had by the will of his mother, inherited a handsome little fortune in the stocks and here, with sufficient to satisfy every want, and the total absence of quiet retirement, he began to enjoy the life of a gentleman.

Besides, he had fallen in love, and that, too, by the merest accident. He had met, in his fishing excursions and lonely walks, Emma Lester, the daughter of the worthy clergyman of the parish, and being struck with her saint-like beauty and affectionate attention to her aged father, had called at the parsonage. After the first difficulty had been surmounted, viz: that breaking the ice, he became a constant visitor there. Often would these young and ardent beings wander forth by the gentle Willimantic, at the rosy hour of day, "And fondly whisper love."

Henry Staunton was now a happy man, and if the thought that he must at length leave those fairy scenes and the maiden he adored, to become the drudge of a warehouse, occasionally clouded his brow, the smile of Emma Lester chased it away as the sun chased away the phantoms of night. Matters went on thus until all the village knew that the young couple loved each other, and the old clergyman, at last discovering the same truth, called them before him and blessed them, and the next day was gathered unto his fathers, leaving Emma to the tender mercies of an uncle in New York who possessed vast wealth, great eccentricity, and as little regard for the feelings of the lovers as old Staunton himself.

Henry Staunton was now eighteen, "and love at that age is apt to burn strong and last long." After seeing the good old man to his long home he endeavored to cheer up his desponding Emma; but the shock to her feelings was so great that her uncle determined to remove to New York at once. A few days, and this determination came upon the ears of Henry Staunton, like a clap of thunder in a clear sky. He had never thought of such a consequence, and altho' it came from the lips of Emma with a smile of hope that the separation would not last, but his own fears told him that it might be forever. He then told his gentle Emma of his father's sternness, and of the probability of his ever consenting to a union between them.

"And is this a fact, Henry Staunton?" said the weeping maiden, "and have you kept such a truth hidden from me so long? Henry, is it not generous, nay, it was unkind in the extreme—but no, I will not believe it; your father will relent and we shall be so happy in our rural bower.—Oh! what a dream I had last night—it was an omen of a bright and glorious career for you!"

At this moment the carriage of Ronald Lester drove up to the door of the parsonage, and interrupted the farther conversation of the lovers.

Henry Staunton, said the old man, after the introduction had been made, "I have heard of you; you have seduced the attention of this innocent and unsophisticated maiden, when you knew your father would never consent to your union with her. You have acted like a scoundrel sir; begone, and never let me see your face again."

Staubton endeavored to expostulate with him, with tear of sorrow in his eye, and the blush of indignation upon his cheek; Emma, weeping, pleaded for a moment's hearing; but it was all to no purpose—the old gentleman had made up his mind, and that was sufficient. In a few minutes Emma's little stock of books and wearing apparel was ready and her uncle, handing her to the carriage, took his seat beside her and ordered the coachman to drive off. Henry Staunton stood watching the carriage as it wound round the hill like one awakened from a dream, but no token of affection was left for him until the Lesters came to a sudden turn in the road, when a white pocket-handkerchief waved along the side of the carriage and fell upon the ground. Staunton sprang to the spot, and seized the treasure, it was marked with the name, and wet with the tears of Emma Lester.

"And am I doomed to disappointment?" said the youth in agony. At that moment a thought flashed upon his mind. "I will leave the country, said he, and forget that I am a Staunton."

In a few hours, he left his father's country seat and proceeded to New London, where he disposed of his mother's legacy, and took his departure, in a merchant's vessel, for England.

After a long passage, young Staunton entered the metropolis of England, & meeting with those who like the sucking fish, live by drawing the vitality from others, he soon lost a portion of his money. He then proceeded to Paris, and was left by the ancestors of Crookford, was taken by the ancestors of Frascati, with exception of a sum sufficient to pay his passage to Lisbon.

Upon his arrival in Lisbon, he was disappointed in finding that his father's vessel which he saw by Lloyd's list was there, had sailed the day previous for Philadelphia. Thus left without money and without friends, his father's consignees refused to believe that he was the son of old Staunton, and the bells of Lisbon shook off a customer of such doubtful character. It was at this period that our tale commences.

It was evening, and the shrill whistle of a November's wind awoke the echoes of the silent city of New York, when a young English officer landed at the Battery from a packet that had just arrived from England. Two stout seamen took his baggage upon their shoulders, and followed him up Broadway until he reached a noble mansion, when he bade them halt. He then approached the door and rang the bell, which was immediately answered.

"Is Mr. Lester at home?" said the officer.

"Mr. Lester?" said the servant. "Mr. Lester does not live here. Mr. Lester has failed in business, and is imprisoned for debt."

"Great God! is it possible?" said the young man in insupportable agony. "But where is his place, Miss Emma? Surely she must be somewhere in the vicinity."

"The young man went to the city, and he was in the face of Staunton; for it was he who had



thus returned, loaded with honors, to claim his first love.

"Take my baggage to the nearest hotel, and leave this card with the landlord," said Stanton to the seaman. Then, swift as a son tearing a reprieve for his condemned father, he sought that bolt upon the escutcheon of freedom—the poor debtor's prison.

Entering the jailer's apartment, he begged to have an interview with the Lesters, which was denied him.

"What is the amount of the execution upon which Mr. Lester is imprisoned?" asked Stanton, with a face teeming with the workings of a noble soul.

"Two thousand dollars!" said the jailer in a rough voice.

"Only two thousand dollars?" said Stanton; "then give me his discharge, for here is the money!"

The jailer was doubtful how to act in this case for some moments, but finally took the money, made out Roland Lester's discharge, and taking the key, unlocked a gloomy cell, and pointing down some mouldy, damp steps said—

"There they are; the doors are all open—they can leave as soon as they wish; and hark!e, young man, the sooner the better."

Henry Stanton took the offered discharge, and soon stood before the inmates of the prison.

"Henry—my own dear Henry!" screamed the maiden as she raised her eyes to note the cause of intrusion at such an hour and throwing herself into his arms, bathed his cheek with tears—

"Then turning said—Uncle, dear uncle, Henry Stanton has come to save us; look up and welcome him for through his instrumentality, our sorrows will soon be at an end."

"Young man," said old Lester, with a frown upon his brow, as he raised himself from his couch, where he had been confined by a fever of the brain since his entrance, "come you here to mock me in my hour of degradation and sorrow—beware! Ronald Lester is in prison—in prison for debt—but he asks no aid from any one—No crime nor dissipation has brought him here. Accident and false partners alone have wrought the changes you behold; and a ruined man may as well die in prison as in the street."

Stanton sprang to his bedside, and grasping the merchant by the hand, said—"Lester, have I deserved this treatment from you? You know I left the country at your command, and now I come with wealth and honor to claim my own true love. I come not to mock at your troubles, but to end them. Here is your discharge—the doors are open—let us be gone!"

The aged merchant gazed steadily at the youth for a few minutes—his frown passed away—a smile played upon his countenance—he raised his head upon his hand.

"Henry Stanton," said he, "you have redeemed yourself I have wronged you deeply; henceforth let your anger cease. Be kind to that dear girl, who like a ministering angel, has hovered around this gloomy prison, and smoothed the coarse and moistened folds of my dying couch. Then with a look of frenzy, he wildly screamed—

"Hail I am free! the prison doors are open—Ronald Lester is not a criminal or the doomed companion of felons. Throw open yonder window wider. Ay, now I see the twinkling lamps—I hear the voices and the steps of busy men—I hear the laugh and the song—but let us to business. Send for a clergyman; I wish to make reparation for injury before I die."

A clergyman was soon found, and to the astonishment of both parties, was ordered to perform the marriage ceremony.

"Emma and Henry," said Lester, "kneel down before me—may God Almighty bless you my children. And now let us away—call my carriage—I must to Wall street, to meet my liabilities—send for my partner—no hope—ruined—lost—imprisoned—free! Ronald Lester is no longer a prisoner! and turning his face to the wall, he expired without a groan."

The next day, the corpse of the ruined and broken-hearted merchant was laid with the dust of his fathers, and immediately afterwards, Henry Stanton and his weeping bride were on their way to Philadelphia. As they entered the city of brotherly love, they were stopped by a long funeral procession, moving to a distant burial place. Stanton enquired of one of the followers whose funeral it was.

"Old Stanton, the miser's," said the man in a rough voice, "and we are hired to mourn on the occasion."

"It is my father's corpse!" said Henry "Give place, for I am the chief mourner here!" and soon his traveling carriage was next the hearse.

The burial being over, the sorrow-stricken son and his weeping wife proceeded to the magnificent mansion of the Stauntons, to brood in deep melancholy over their respective losses. But grief must have an end, and every thing else, and Stanton and his wife at length became calm enough to leave the reading of the will. The first part of Henry's will was a simple one, and by a codicil, dated the very same day that Henry returned from spending his last dollar at the cafe in Lisbon, the will was amended, and the whole of the Stanton property was made his own at his father's death, provided he should return to the United States within seven years after that event.

Henry Stanton continued to hold his commission in the navy of Britain, until the war of the revolution broke out, when he sided with his countrymen, and threw off the shackles imposed by royalty.

Years rolled on, and the Stauntons became more powerful and wealthy than ever in the rising and beautiful city of Penn., and finally, when our hero and his partner retired from the busy stage of life, a numerous progeny was left to perpetuate the family name; but where they are now, God only knows. Upon opening the will the children were made acquainted, for the first time, with their father's former poverty and distress, but with all virtuous and honest men, they felt that they had cause to be grateful that once, in early life, Henry Stanton, on the quay of Lisbon, had been reduced to his last shilling.

Captain Spitzire became, in time, an admiral of the red, and died one day, at a public dinner in London, leaving behind him his virtues and his vices, for the satisfaction of his friends, and the tender mercies of his enemies. His last words were—"Bury me in the grave!"

Gentle readers, my long yarn is at an end and your task is over. Adieu; and remember never to be above an honorable employment, nor to spend your first or last shilling for "draught fresh drawn from hell," that stupefies the brain, and chains the immortal soul.

## OXFORD DEMOCRAT.

PARIS, FEBRUARY 13, 1844.

"The great popular party is already rallied almost en masse around the banner which is leading the party to its final triumph. The few that still lag will soon be rallied under its ample folds. On that banner is inscribed: FREE TRADE; LOW DUTIES; NO BARRIERS TO COMMERCE; ECONOMY; RE-TRIBUTION; AND STRICT ADHERENCE TO THE CONSTITUTION. Victory in such a cause will be great and glorious; and if its principles be faithfully and firmly adhered to, after it is achieved, much will it redound to the honor of those by whom it will have been won; and long will it perpetuate the liberty and prosperity of the country."—*Callaghan.*

### "STUMP SYSTEM" vs. "CAUCUS SYSTEM."

Our correspondent, "Plebeian," in the last Democrat condemns the Caucus System and the Plurality System of selecting candidates for office, and attributes to the people that the "Stump System" is altogether preferable. All unite in calling the article of "Plebeian," a first rate one, and consider his reasons strong and philosophical. But, it seems to us, that the matter is not entirely settled, however cogent the reasoning, or how ever convincing the arguments in favor of the "Stump System." There is a radical defect in the premises of "Plebeian," a defect which, if not remedied, will consign the Stump System to as obscure a corner in the tomb of things least, worthless, and impracticable, as ever system could be entitled to.

According to the theory of "Plebeian," it is proper to suppose that, in any given case, as many persons of each party would take the stump as considered themselves qualified for office. A half dozen of each party would in this manner put themselves up for office, and canvass the District of their constituents twice or three times to convince the people of their fitness for office. When election day comes, each one of these candidates would have his favorites, and receive votes accordingly; and the way men would scatter would be worse than at the last elections.

"Plebeian," without looking at this result, makes all fair weather, by blinding himself to so natural a consequence. He supposes that on the adoption of the Stump System, office seeking, by wholesale, will suddenly die a natural death, and only a single candidate of each party will be voted for by the people. But this is supposing an impossibility. The defect therefore in this "System," as propounded by "Plebeian," has all the solid arguments against it which can be brought against either of the other systems. In fine, it would not concentrate, but distract public opinion.

The truth is, we need something like the Caucus System, or like the system proposed in the Democrat some weeks since, even if we were to adopt to some extent the Stumping business, in order that a single individual might be selected. To suppose that a single individual of each party would take the "Stump," in a Congressional District, and secure the entire approbation of the public, while all others remained silent, inactive, & contented, is to suppose that the ordinary course and constitution of things would change. It is preposterous. No man need ever expect to realize such an era. We do not intend this as an answer to "Plebeian," for we leave that to able hands. We should be glad to hear from him again, and others who are interested in this important matter.

It is a fact worthy of consideration that about 5000 young females and women leave this State for the want of productive employment. This number it is estimated have gone from this State to Massachusetts and other States during the past year. If this be owing to any cause which can be remedied by Legislation or otherwise, it should be immediately searched out and removed. On an average, it is estimated that each of these young persons pay \$7.00 to go to the factories. Here is the sum of \$35,000 paid to go to their employ. They come to their homes generally once a year, which would double this sum, making an aggregate of \$70,000, merely for travelling expenses. If each female were to earn \$2.50 per week, one half of which would be spent for board and clothing, it would amount in net profits to about \$130 per annum, which makes the aggregate earnings of 5000 girls a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This sum is not brought home, but nearly all of it is spent, or invested in Savings Banks or other Institutions in Mass.

This is not all. The earnings of the young men who go from this State to Massachusetts, is even greater than the females. If these calculations are correct from five to ten hundred thousand dollars of business, labor and capital are carried out of this State every year. It is time that our people looked to this subject. It is one of vast importance. It concerns the wealth and happiness of our whole State. Political parties, instead of vying with each other to see which can call the hardest names, or instead of quarrelling among themselves, should turn their attention to the sober realities of Political Economy. How to employ the labour and capital of the State to the best possible use and advantage, ought to be the study—the never ceasing study of the politician, and his services should be valued in proportion as he excels in this knowledge, and his capacity to apply it.

Millerism.—It is stated in the Report of the Utica, N. Y. Hospital for the Insane, that seven persons were entered in consequence of Millerism. We should think this, and various other cases of the same kind, would warn those who are engaged in the propagation of Miller's opinions to be more cool—less zealous, and less extravagant (not to say, less fanatical) in their manner of spreading his tenets. The 21st of next month will put a period to their doctrines. Within that time, according to Miller, the world will pass away, and the Bible prove itself true; or it will continue as usual, and the Bible will be false. Nonsensical.

Cass Meeting.—Gen. Cass' friends met at the State House, Augusta, last week according to previous notice, but the meeting was not numerously attended. The proceedings have not been published. The General's friends are said to be numerous about Augusta, but as it is considered certain that Mr. Van Buren will be nominated, they think it unwise to make any popular demonstration in favor of Cass.

NOT CERTAIN.—Mr. Clay's nomination to the Presidency is not certain. He may be thrown off the Presidential line in '44, as he was in '40. Some of the great men in his interest before the Harrisburg Convention, turned against him on that eventful day; and he was rejected. It is shrewdly suspected that the Editors of the Evening Journal and Tribune, N. Y., will serve him as other great men did in '40. They will only support him, hurray for him, and laud him till Convention day, then, abandon him all "shaven and shorn." They only pretend to support him to keep up appearances, and show a united front. So says a contemporary.

For ourself, we think Mr. Clay will be nominated. The great arm of Whiggery will be paralyzed if he is not. Mr. Clay and all his strong admirers would leave the Whig party if he were to be rejected. Not only so, he would probably be run as a candidate if another were nominated. Mr. Clay knows better than to trust his claims to a Convention unless he is sure it will contain a majority of his friends. The Whig National Convention, if they have one, will be solely for the purpose of making things look right before the people, and satisfying them that Clay possesses unbounded popularity. The great wire pullers of that Convention will go to it and partake in it ostensibly for the purpose of agreeing upon the best man; but merely for the purpose of quieting a host who are opposed to Clay's election. But, however this may be, there is one fact of which we may feel certain, and that is, that Mr. Henry Clay will be a candidate for the next Presidency whether nominated or not, and whether the Evening Journal and Tribune are sincerely for or against him.

Make your Sleighs so as to form a double track. Read the following and see what we lose by the present construction.

For the Age.—I noticed in the last Age, over the signature of Oxford, an account of the contemplated improvements in the road from Kennebec to Colebrook, N. H.

If the State should see fit to make an appropriation for that object, I have no objection, as it would give my friends in the upper part of New Hampshire and Vermont a nearer road to Portland.

My only object in writing this is to caution my friends in Kennebec from giving money for that object, with the expectation of getting the trade from that part of the country.

All the trade from Colebrook and vicinity could be secured to Kennebec, it would be very small compared with the anticipations of many.

But it will be impossible to get their trade so long as we draw our single sleighs in such a manner as to make but one path. Last winter, eight or ten double sleighs loaded with pork, butter, cheese, &c., started from the upper part of New Hampshire for Augusta. They prosecuted their journey to Canton, and then turned off to Portland, cursing our single roads.

FRANKLIN.

February 19, 1843.

Great Freshet in Alabama.—The Warrior, Natchez and Bigbee Rivers in this State are deluged with water and their banks everflowing. The face of the country is but one vast sheet of water. Cotton, unpicked and in bale, was seen floating in every direction. The loss is immense. The Ertaw Whig (Ala.) says, "that never since Noah's flood have we had anything like so much rain as we have had for the last two months, and we are unable to say when it will stop. We are looking every day for Steam boats to pass through our town! All that it is necessary to let them pass through the country any where is to clear away the undergrowth."

Credit of the State.—In accordance with a law recently passed by the Legislature, the Treasurer is purchasing the State Scrip at a premium or advance of 2 1/2 per cent. The law requires that the Treasurer shall purchase it to the best advantage, yet he is not able to purchase State Scrip for less, though it has only about a year to run. There is not probably a State in the Union whose Scrip commands such an advance.

The article from the Augusta Age, which we publish to-day, in relation to the obstructions thrown in the way by the Whigs to the progress of Legislation, is a real scorcher, and disturbs their equanimity to an unusual extent. The coat fitted exactly, and they are wise enough to put it on, but the manner in which they wear it shows that it is full of spikes and other pointed instruments.

Cure for Bots.—A farmer in this town informs us that for several years he has used the following simple remedy for the cure of Bots and worms in horses, and has never known it fail. Take about one half bushel of frozen potatoes, thaw them gradually before the fire or in the sun, and then give them to the horse. They produce a relaxation of the bowels and bring away the bots and worms without injury to the horse. Can any one inform us why potatoes not frozen will not answer the same purpose?

Struck with Consumption.—A certain Democratic paper which came to us in the form of a half sheet last week. It was blacker than common and dim withal. We hope its exit, if it must come, will be peaceful and glorious, like the prospects of the cause it supports.

General Ticket.—The committee on Elections, in Congress, have reported that those members chosen by general Ticket in New Hampshire and other States are entitled to seats.

Miles Oleott of N. H. was one of the "Democratic Whigs" who signed a letter requesting Mr. Webster to stand for the Presidency. He was a member of the Hartford Convention.

If it would not be uncourtous, we should like to ask the Editor of the Age, or "J." Reporter of the American, who they mean when they speak of Allen from Oxford.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

In Senate—Saturday, Feb. 17. A Bill was passed to be engrossed to incorporate the Upper Stillwater Bridge Company; likewise a Bill repealing the Waterville Iron Manufacturing Company.

House.—Passed to be engrossed, Resolves for the abatement of tax on certain State lands.

Finally passed—Resolves in favor of Passamaquoddy Indians—in favor of Penobscot Indians—to repair the Fish River Road.

Discussed the Resolves providing for Electors. No action had thereon. The Resolves adopt the General Ticket system. The Democrats as a general thing favor the Resolves, the Whigs oppose them.

In Senate—Monday, Feb. 19. Passed to be enacted—Bill authorizing the surrender of the Charter of the Portland Stage Company. Bill to incorporate the Waldo Mineral Spring Company was indefinitely postponed.

The Joint Committee on the reception of any money now lying in the U. S. Treasury, to the credit of this State, have reported that the Distribution money be not received.

House.—The following petition was presented by Mr. Paine, of Bangor, from two of his constituents.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Maine, in Legislature assembled:

Whereas, it is generally believed that Ardent Spirits is a commodity of merchandise, and whereas it is used to some considerable extent in Mechanics, and as a medicine, both externally and internally, by the temperate as well as the intemperate, the poor as well as the rich.—We pray that your Honorable Body may see the propriety of having it go to the consumer unshackled like as other merchandise.—That there should be no license for the sale of it, and more especially that no license be necessary to be obtained by the vendor of it; for your petitioners cannot see the propriety of licensing the sale of Alcoholic liquors, while other liquors are allowed to be sold without such license: And now since King Alcohol has so many times been tried, and condemned, and executed, we hope it may appear apparent that a license for the sale of his dead body is entirely useless, and that it is ungenerous to tax the dead for the support of the living.

C. B. ROBBINS, SILAS PATTEN,

Report of committee on the Judiciary declaring that Bill entitled an Act relating to Sheriff's ought not to pass, was taken up. The Report was accepted and the Bill refused a passage—Yeas, 79, Nays, 24. This probably ends the matter in relation to Sheriff's.

In Senate—Tuesday, Feb. 20. Passed to be engrossed—Bill to repeal an act relating to appeals from the Court of County Commissioners—and certain Resolves in relation to the appointment of Commissioners to locate grants and determine the extent of post-cessory claims under the Treaty with Great Britain.

In House.—Mr. Bradbury, of Kennebec, moved that Committee on the new Valuation be discharged, and the subject referred to the next Legislature. This caused considerable debate. The motion was finally laid on the table—77 to 34.

The House recommitted the Report on Job Printing by a vote of 75 to 50. Mr. Jarvis declined and utterly refused to set on that committee for reasons which he mentioned. Three gentlemen were then appointed in succession by the Speaker who declined. Finally Mr. Duxton, of North Yarmouth, was appointed and accepted.

In Senate—Wednesday, Feb. 21. Sheriff Bill laid on the table. An Order was introduced enquiring into the expediency of authorizing Roman Catholic Priests located among the French settlements of Madawaska to publish intentions of marriage according to the usages of Roman Catholic communities.

House.—Resolves in relation to a reduction of postage were laid on the table. 500 copies of the Land Distribution Report were ordered to be printed. Bill in relation to the Bath and Portland Rail Road was laid on the table, and the House adjourned.

In Senate—Thursday, Feb. 22. Mr. Strickland made Report on State Prison. Mr. Sawtelle from committee appointed to see when the Legislature may take a recess, Reported that if the Valuation were referred to the next Legislature the present session might close on the 4th of March. A long debate ensued on this Report, some thinking that a recess might be sooner, some later, and some thinking that all the business properly coming before this Legislature ought to be disposed of, whether it takes a long or a short time. Report laid on the table till to-morrow.

House.—Portland and Bath Rail Road Bill was taken up and several amendments offered. It was finally passed to be engrossed, 69 to 60.

In Senate—Friday, Feb. 23. Mr. Sawtelle moved to take up the Report in relation to the adjournment of the Legislature. A debate ensued which occupied some time. The Report still lies on the table, however, and will probably continue there; and the Valuation Committee will continue their labors till they have completed their Report. It would be mere chivalry to go as far as the Legislature now has and then dismiss the Valuation and refer it to the next Legislature. We do not believe in the necessity of its taking up so much time. Portland and Bath Rail Road Bill passed to be engrossed, 19 to 5.

House.—Some discussion occurred on the Fish Bill, Bill for the speedy economical administration of justice, summer sessions, &c.

Capital Punishment.—A Bill is before the Pennsylvania Legislature abolishing Capital Punishment. There is a strong probability that it will pass and become the law of that State.

The Oxford Music Association give a Concert at Rumford on Thursday next at two o'clock P. M.

FATAL DEED.—An affair of honor came off in the vicinity of Washington on the 16th inst., between Julian May, a son of Dr. May, of Washington, and Joseph Cochrane. Weapons, rifles, distance, 30 paces. Cochrane fell dead at the first shot. The quarrel originated at a ball room on the same morning. Barbarous practice!—murder on sight! N. E. Democrat.

The federalists in the House have been artful enough, in misconstrue and pervert an article in the Thrice-Weekly Age of Tuesday, into an attack upon that body, instead of a just condemnation of their own factious course, as it really was.

We repeat again, that if the "reckless" minority of the House persevere in their conspiracy to stave off an adjournment by senseless clamor and senseless debates, a remedy exists in the other branches of the government, and ought to be applied.

Our democratic friends in the House cannot arrest the factiousists in that body. Under the operation of parliamentary rules, the minority can delay and impede the progress of public business, in spite of every effort on the part of those who are held responsible by the people. If this state of things continues to exist, what possible remedy is there but the conservative power of the Senate and Governor?

A few federal orators do not make up the House, by any manner of means. The democracy of the House, make up its majority, and they are on this question in harmony with the Senate, all the false issues of federal cunning to the contrary, notwithstanding.

The conduct of the federal leaders on the floor of the House, has been disgraceful and unparalleled. No threats shall deter us from exposing and denouncing them. They have wasted time with idle propositions, and idler debates. They have done this as a matter of system and of concert. Every body knows it. Nobody knows it better than they do themselves. If they persist in this notorious "mischief"; if the democratic majority cannot carry on the public business "in the face of the unparalleled obstructions interposed by a reckless faction"; remedies fortunately exist. The firmness to apply them, also exist. Undoubtedly these factiousists are greatly offended at the mention of such remedies. We are neither sorry for it, or able to help it. The Constitution of the State was made by the people, and will be enforced by their servants, let a desperate minority clamor as it may. Federalism always clamors when it cannot rule.—Age.

## CHEAP WOOL.

Wool is so cheap under the new tariff, that the farmers in Wayne county are cutting the throats of their flocks. The Cayuga Tocsin, a paper which discusses the tariff question intelligently, says:

"How or in what manner the present tariff operates beneficially to the wool-grower, the farmers of this country would be glad to know. It is true, that article brings more in the market than it formerly did, but even now it does not pay for the labor and expense of its production. In our section of the State, thousands of sheep have been butchered, for the sole reason that wool-growing has been clearly demonstrated to be a profitless and losing business. Whig logic may find some method of explaining this iniquitous effect of the new tariff, but we acknowledge ourselves wholly unequal to the task."

Now, if we take the doctrine of the protectionists to be true, this cheapness should have been caused by a high duty on imported wool—for taxation, they say, is a sovereign cheaper of all commodities.

But, if we look into the new tariff, we find that all cheap wools pay a duty of only five per cent. The farmer pays more than a hundred and fifty per cent. upon his box chain, and a duty about as high upon fabrics with which his family is clothed, while his own wool has the advantage of the munificent incidental protection of five per cent. imposed by the kind attention of his friends, the manufacturers, and their friends in Congress.

The South American wools are brought so cheap in the country where they are produced, and come to us in so dirty a state, that although they are really of a fair quality, their value does not exceed seven cents a pound; and wools of this description are charged with the mere nominal duty of five per cent. The manufacturer purchases this foreign wool, and the Wayne county farmer brings sheep to the knife.

A fair tariff, such a one as the friends of free trade would make, would impose a duty of twenty per cent. upon wools of all descriptions.

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY.—In the Hartford Times we find the following extract of a letter from New Orleans viz: "I attended church on Sunday morning last, but the service was so interrupted by the beating of drums and the shouts of the multitude without that the clergyman, (the Rev. Mr. Wheaton, of your city,) was compelled to dismiss the congregation. On reaching the street, it became evident that some musical excitement prevailed among the multitude, and on searching for the cause, I soon discovered the Hon Henry Clay."

REMARKS.—This is the candidate for the religious community! His worshippers with "drums and shouts" put a stop to the worship of the Living God! Yet how many preachers of the gospel and professors of Christianity support him with a zeal and devotion they never exhibit or feel for the God to whom they look for salvation!—*Kendall's Erpositor.*

The expression of public opinion in favor of an early adjournment of the Legislature, is uniform, decided and urgent, from all quarters. It seems to be agreed, that the now manifest conspiracy of the federal leaders in the House, to protract the session, justifies and calls for the most energetic measures. There may be no means of expediting the public business in that branch of the government, in the face of unparalleled obstruction interposed by a reckless faction but remedies exist in the hitherto unexercised power of other branches. The application of those remedies, will not be a matter of doubtful policy, unless there is an immediate abatement of the mischief complained of.—Age.

JAMES C. MADIGAN, Esq., Assistant Clerk of the House, has been appointed by the Governor or Council, Superintendent of Education, in relation to the Education of youth in the Massachusetts settlements. Mr. Madigan, we understand, will immediately enter upon the duties of his office.—Age.







